

Willm. Taylor
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STRICTURES

ON

MR. BURKE'S TWO LETTERS,

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ADDRESSED TO

A Member of the present Parliament.

PART THE FIRST.

LONDON,

**PRINTED FOR G. G. J. AND J. ROBINSON,
PATER-NOSTER ROW.**

1796.
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ADDRESSED TO

ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL.

A Member of the present Parliament.

PART THE FIRST.



PRINTED FOR A. C. J. AND J. ROBINSON,

STATIONERS' HALL, LONDON.

1796.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE urgency of the occasion will sufficiently explain the author's motives for publishing his remarks in detached parts. The aspect of the times is critical. Moments are pregnant with the fate of years. The most trivial weight thrown into the scale of reason and moderation, may now influence that decision, which it may ever afterwards be impossible to reverse.

The writings of Mr. Burke are addressed to the passions. Many can feel, but few deliberate. Hence their influence is extensive. The impulse of the imagination is instantaneous, that of the reason is slow—hence they cannot be too soon counteracted.

To Mr. Burke no apology is due. He has written on a great national question. He has connected it with his character, his conduct, and his principles. These therefore necessarily become the subject of animadversion. He has done more. He has endeavoured to prevent the return of Peace, not by cool argument, but by a national insult. He has not only judged, but acted for others. He has therefore given to every individual a right to enter his protest, in doing which the author is convinced he shall be joined by the voice of MILLIONS.

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STRICTURES, &c.

SOME faint hopes have at length arisen of the termination of a war, which for nearly the space of four years, has been conducted on all sides with a prodigal waste of human life, unexampled in history. At this awful moment, when **PEACE** "sits like the light down upon
"the thistle's beard," and suspense agitates the bosom of every human being not totally insensible to the sufferings of his nature, Mr. Burke, the her-

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mit of the present crusade, has once more raised his voice, and by every motive of persuasion, of denunciation, of terror, and of reproach, has endeavoured to stimulate the expiring embers of national resentment into a new flame.

Of the many extraordinary circumstances of which the close of the eighteenth century is doomed to be a melancholy witness, it is not the least extraordinary, that a man of polished manners, of apparent humanity, once the advocate of liberty, and still assuming the character of a friend to the human race, should become the avowed and ostensible instigator of a most sanguinary and cruel war. A war which one of his noble disciples has not blushed to denominate *bellum internecinum*; as if among mortal beings, and mortal concerns, hatred alone were to be immortal. Still more extraordinary is it, that this advocate of contention should, by early edu-
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cation, by a fervid imagination, by long habits of controversy and intercourse with society, be enabled to bring forwards his cause with something like the appearance of argument, and should hope to counteract, in the bosom of the nation, not only the returning emotions of pity, but the deep-felt sense of its own losses, and its own sufferings.

These things, even in these times, are extraordinary; but there are others that are portentous; and if the former cannot be observed without surprise, the latter cannot be contemplated without horror. Mr. Burke's *Thoughts on the French Revolution* were the signal for a foreign war. The two letters now published appear to be the harbingers of civil commotion. In these letters, representations the most degrading to human nature, are incessantly spread before the imagination, and the sound and healthful faculties of the mind are debauched by

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being brought into contact with enormities, exaggerated even beyond poetical sufferance, but which, if true, ought to be covered with the veil of eternal oblivion. Ideal crimes of the most heinous nature are hypothetically introduced, but amply dwelt upon. (a) A certain class of our fellow subjects are pointed out for proscription, by number, if not by name. (b) Suspicion, the ingredient that decomposes society, is poured out in unceasing streams; the ruler is opposed to the subject, and the subject to the ruler. The majority are called upon to persecute the minority, and the minority are not only incited to rebel, but flattered with the prospect of success. (c) In attaining the object on which Mr. Burke has unhappily bent the wishes of his declining age, the destruction of the French Republic, all intermediate considerations are to be overlooked, all the

(a) *Letters*, p. 120.

(b) *Ib.* 67.

(c) *Ib.* 68.

the common feelings of human nature extinguished. Not only individual comfort is to be relinquished, and individual safety endangered, but the very existence of the country is to be put upon the hazard of the die; and to such an extreme is this infatuation carried, that in order to effect the destruction of the system established by the French nation, to whom we are told, "the will, the wish, the want, the liberty, the toil, the blood of individuals is as nothing," we are called upon, in no ambiguous language, to adopt a similar system ourselves. (a)

In the name of manhood, in the name of humanity, in the name of common sense, let us for a moment divest ourselves of the wizard's spell, and endeavour to throw a gleam of light on the

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(a) *Letters*, p. 181.

mist with which he has surrounded us. What is the irremediable offence, the crime never to be atoned, that the people of France have committed against this country? Is it in having effected a change in their government by the revolution of 1789? They differ from ourselves in this instance, only by being a century behind us. Is it in subjecting their monarch to the axe. The British nation set the example. Is it in any inherent and unprovoked hostility of the new government against this country? On the contrary, the new government, proud of having emulated us by the establishment of a limited monarchy, held out to us the right hand of fellowship, yet unpolluted with blood, and looked with an anxious eye for the encouragement, the countenance, and the alliance of England. A thousand times repulsed by the sullen silence of the government, they still flattered themselves that the people of England could not be uninterested

uninterested when the cause of liberty was triumphant, and the standards of England, and of America, were united with those of France, in the Hall of the National Assembly. Is the inexpressible crime of the French their attack on our allies, their rapid successes, and the annexing the conquered countries to their own dominions? Let it be remembered that this spirit of subjugation was not apparent in the early part of the revolution, when a declaration was made that the French nation would for ever relinquish the idea of extending the territories they then possessed, and would confine themselves to their acknowledged limits; and that no such intention appeared till their frontier was closely surrounded by formidable enemies, and offensive and defensive war became convertible terms. Let it also be remembered, that the Royal and Imperial Vultures, which then hung over, and have since divided Poland, had already

in idea gratified their ambition with the spoils of dismembered France, and the Duke of Brunswick had published an avowal of his purpose, worthy even of the pen of Mr. Burke. If, under such circumstances, the French have resisted force by force, and have ultimately carried the seat of war into the dominions of their enemies, the preservation of their political and individual existence by the fair contention of arms, is not to be imputed to them as a crime. Without greatly incroaching on that hatred to an enemy, which political establishments require, it may surely be allowed, that the French have not immoderately abused that power with which the fortune of war has invested them, and that the capture of Brussels, and of Amsterdam, bore little resemblance to that slaughter and devastation which was to have taken place at Paris, had the pious purpose of the allies been crowned with success. Nor ought it to be forgotten, that

that of the countries thus occupied by the French, some have requested to be united to the Republic, by the general voice, not equivocally expressed; and that even where this has not been the case, the provinces acquired by the enemy have not been ravished from *this country*; but that on the contrary, without our losing a single inch of territory, we have availed ourselves of the difficulties under which the French have laboured, to strip them of their detached possessions in almost every part of the globe.

Where then are we to seek for the causes of this unalterable aversion, this implacable resentment against the French nation? a resentment which it seems is to be carried to such an extreme, that the same globe of earth on which Providence has placed us, can no longer suffice for our common residence?—Whence is it that the adverse shores of France and of England are to frown on each other

other eternal hostility ? and that the spirit of revenge is never to be appeased, till of two powerful nations, one shall be destroyed, and the beasts of the forest shall take up their abode amidst the habitations of elegance, of industry, and of peace ?

I anticipate the reply of the abettors of the war. It is sufficiently discoverable in the letters now before me. The excesses, and the crimes, and the conquests of the French may be pardoned, their attack upon Holland, their overweening pride, nay even their declaration of war against this Country are only objects of secondary consideration, matters of aggravation rather than of offence ; (a) but it is their principles, and their maxims, that are to be the objects of the eternal enmity of all civilized states. It is the Jacobinical doctrine of the rights of the people with

(a) *Letters*, p. 130.

with which we are to maintain perpetual war. Whether the people exist for the rulers, or the rulers for the people, is the question. A question which admits of no medium in reply. The French have decided it for themselves. They have perhaps decided it wrong. Granted. Let us then be at war with their opinion. Let us confute it by every rational mode of discussion; and if you please let us at all events resolve to adhere to that which we have ourselves avowed. But, it is said, if a pacification take place with France, this will be impossible; such is the insinuating nature, such the rapid progress of the new doctrines, that they have already made Eighty thousand converts even in this Kingdom. (a)—This information is alarming. The more so as it certainly induces a suspicion that these doctrines may have some foundation in truth; but at the same time it proves that there has been something essentially

(a) Letters, p. 67.

essentially wrong in the measures we have hitherto taken to prevent their progress. If, among four hundred thousand thinking men, whom Mr. Burke considers as the natural representative of the people in this country, eighty thousand have in a few years imbibed the opinions of an enemy, with whom during that time we have carried on a most sanguinary war, and have become, to adopt his own expression, "pure Jacobins, utterly incapable of amendment," (a) it is at least evident, that war is not the proper mode of precluding the dissemination of such opinions. Let us endeavour to prevent the rising of the sun, or to stay the swelling of the ocean, for the material world is in some degree subject to the control of mechanical force; but the intellectual world scoffs at the weak attempt which would limit its operations by the coarse and clumsy restrictions of bolts, and chains.

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(a) *Letters*, p. 67.

In a discussion of this nature, it is needless to enter upon the question, whether France or England gave the first cause of umbrage, and thereby occasioned the war. Nor, though I entertain an opinion on the subject, do I care how such question may be decided. The point now in debate is, whether there be such a permanent ground of offence, such a cause continually operating, as may justify us in the sight of God and of the world, in prolonging the contest of blood, after a fair opportunity is afforded us of bringing it to a termination. If there be, let those who call for a continuance of the war come forward and point out by some clear, distinct, and comprehensible arguments, the motives and reasons of the war. Let the specific object for which thousands are to bleed, and millions are to suffer, be made known to those whom it so deeply concerns, and let us no longer be left, like intoxicated brawlers, to contend against each other in the dark,

dark, without being able to explain the cause of the fray.

If we look for reasons of this kind to the letters under our consideration, we are not only miserably disappointed in our researches, but there does not appear to be even an attempt to lay before us one rational ground, one fair and manly argument, either for the commencement or the continuance of the war. All is vague, illimitable, and void. Horrid forms surround us on every side; they appear and retire in dreadful succession; but as often as we attempt to grapple with them, they elude our grasp. The unformed spectre which Mr. Burke has raised from the tomb of the murdered monarchy of France, “ which subsists
“ on the poison of other states,” “ which
“ has conquered the finest part of Europe, and which distresses, disunites,
“ deranges, and breaks to pieces all the
“ rest,”

“rest,” (a) is at once the cause of our enmity, and the object of our vengeance. But a war against poetical fictions is yet more absurd than a war against opinions. Figures of rhetoric may amuse, but they may also mislead, and on this subject it is dangerous to be led astray. We next find ourselves at war with an *armed doctrine*, “which has by its essence a “faction of opinion, and of interest, and “of enthusiasm in every country.” (b) That doctrines are propagated by arms, is at least as doubtful as that their effects may be prevented by arms. Fanatical conquerors, professing a particular faith, may by force of arms occupy the territory of those professing another faith; they may even compel the vanquished to an exterior conformity to their rites, and a compliance with their customs; but it will scarcely be contended, that the sword, whilst it hews down their bodies,

(a) *Letters*, p. 6.

(b) *Ib.* p. 22.

bodies, operates conviction on their minds. One of the most deep rooted principles in human nature is a resistance to the argument of force. The danger from an armed doctrine arises therefore only from arming to oppose it. Let the parties agree to lay aside their implements of destruction, and the doctrine is unarmed, and must rest its further propagation on the inherent truth of its dogmas, or the vigilance and acuteness of its professors. To contend against *armed doctrines*, and *unformed phantoms*, is not however the business of those who direct their conduct by the plain dictates of common sense, and who feel a reluctance to sacrifice their substantial enjoyments, and agitate their bosoms with factitious passions, where folly or when fear give the word of command.

If it be possible from the letters before us to ascertain in any degree what is the specific nature of the war, we may denominate

nominate it a *war of dignity*. "We
 " have been proud and great," says Mr.
 Burke, " and great because we were
 " proud ;" (a) but the pride of states,
 like the pride of individuals, is often
 both the symptom, and the cause of their
 ruin. Pride, founded on arrogant pre-
 tensions to superiority, is the ready me-
 thod of incurring universal hatred, if
 not of exciting universal contempt.
 " Power, and eminence, and considera-
 " tion, are not things to be begged,"
 says Mr. Burke, " they must be com-
 " manded." (b) But Mr. Burke should
 have considered that power, and emi-
 nence, and consideration, are all rela-
 tive, and imply submission, and inferi-
 ority, and weakness, in the rest of man-
 kind. To command them, is in other
 words to maintain perpetual warfare. "To
 " ask them as the alms of your ene-
 my," (c) is to ask your enemy to permit
 you to trample on his head.

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(a) *Letters*, p. 1.(b) *Ib.* p. 2.(c) *Ib.* p. 2.

But if it be in vain to search through these letters for the substantial causes of offence, and the real grounds of the war, they are by no means wanting in every species of incitement that can prompt the giddy and stimulate the proud to the prosecution of it. What is wanting in reason is made up in passion; what is deficient in argument, is compensated by abuse. Nor is this abuse directed wholly against the enemy. We ourselves freely participate in it. If British courage has been personified by the character of the Bull-dog, Mr. Burke is his master, who plies the trade of blood, and by menaces and blows, excites the fury of the animal against the object of his wrath. The very apprehension of the inefficacy of his attempt, though he has hitherto had little cause of regret on that head, rouses all his powers. His disappointment in not being gratified with the blood of the persons lately accused of high treason, breaks out in the grossest

est libel against the public administration of justice in this country; that modern times have witnessed. Nay, "ALL THE PARTS OF THE STATE," if we may believe Mr. Burke, "have their correspondence and consent." "In proportion as we approximate to the poisonous jaws of anarchy, the fascination grows irresistible. In proportion as we are attracted towards the focus of *illegality, irreligion, and desperate enterprize, all the venomous and blighting insects of the state* are awakened into life." (a) Such is the picture which Mr. Burke exhibits of the present state of his country. Can the pencil of Jacobinism itself improve its touches, or heighten its deformity?

But if such be the language in which Mr. Burke addresses his friends whom he incites to the attack, by what new figures of speech does he designate his enemies, the objects of his vengeance?

(a) *Letters*, p. 22.

His genius here expands itself in a congenial element, and “ existence sees him “ spurn her bounded reign.” As far as the enormities of France can supply him with materials—alas, no scanty storehouse—whatever is hateful in manners, whatever is detestable in guilt, is disgustingly spread abroad, to stink, and putrify, and infect mankind. With a contempt of all discrimination as to the different parties who have obtained the superiority in France, and which are in some instances as opposite as light and darkness, Mr. Burke characterizes the whole, through their various successions, and changes, as a horde of Regicides, Atheists, Assassins, and Robbers ; existing only by rapine, and thirsting only for blood. The temperate conduct of the adherents to a limited monarchy, who stemmed for a while the tide of public fury, and now sleep in death, or languish in dungeons, for their faithful support of the throne ; the disinterested
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and philosophic character of the Girondists, who, though favorable to the establishment of a republic, opposed the ferocious purposes of the anarchists, and sealed their sincerity with their blood; the monsters who succeeded to the supreme authority, who trampled upon the ashes of virtue, and of science, and attempted once more to brutalize mankind; and the present rulers of the French nation, who firmly opposed themselves to the wasting arm of despotism, and by one virtuous effort called down upon themselves the blessings of imprisoned and hopeless thousands, and atoned in a moment for half their crimes; all these gradations and varieties of virtue, and of guilt, under the indiscriminating pencil of this great artist, are marked only by one sombre hue, and appear uniformly and consistently detestable in every variation and in every light. It is of no avail in his estimation, that the energy of virtue was opposed to the ener-

gy of guilt. His hatred for the dying patriot, is as sincere, as for the triumphant villain who consigns him to death. The guillotin, though its execrable motion has long been stayed, is with Mr. Burke in full requisition ; and to such a preposterous extreme does he indulge his rancour, that he has not blushed to represent the members of the present French directory, as measuring their diplomatic residents with their eye in the moment of audience, “ and fitting to “ their necks the slider of the guillotin.”

Assertions so unqualified, inforced with language so vindictive, and calculated to impress upon the public mind so extreme a spirit of resentment, can scarcely be attributed by charity itself even to the errors of a great and generous mind. No—magnanimity spurns such factitious support. Generosity dwells not with greedy joy on the motives of dissention. Revenge and hatred
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are allied to fear, the concomitant of little passions and of little minds.

Let the contempt of mankind be directed against the follies of the French, and its indignation against their crimes; but let us not obstinately and unjustly close our eyes to the faults or the failings of their enemies. When the veil of prejudice shall be withdrawn, and the passions that now vibrate in every direction, shall be at rest with the bosoms which they agitate, the future historian, whilst he marks with severe fidelity the excesses of the French, will trace with impartiality the circumstances from whence they arose. Divested of temporary hatred, and of local affections, he will combine effects with their causes, and will not attribute to national caprice, or inherent depravity, those errors which an imperious necessity, or the operation of external causes, have in a great degree occasioned. He will inquire whence it

could happen, that a system of reformation, begun under auspicious omens, and promising to terminate in the mutual happiness of the sovereign, and of the people, should experience so fatal a reverse. Why a whole nation who vied with each other in a noble enthusiasm to sacrifice their hereditary honors, their possessions, and their lives, to the welfare, the safety, and the happiness of their Country, should, within so short an interval, disgrace it by the active commission, or the passive endurance, of unheard of cruelties, and unexampled crimes. His researches will soon discover to him an adequate cause for so extraordinary a change; and he will perceive, that in proportion as the surrounding states of Europe attempted to control, to terrify, and to conquer the French, their internal dissensions became more dreadful, and their national character more ferocious. The possibility of an union between those who were secretly dissatisfied

dissatisfied at home, with those who were in open hostility abroad, will appear to him as the fruitful germ of all subsequent evil. He will see that jealousy and distrust led the way to hatred and persecution; and that the apprehension of the enemy produced in the interior of France, that devastation, and carnage, which its armies in vain attempted to produce on the frontiers. Nor will he, whilst he apportions to each of the contending parties his proper share in the common guilt, forget the numerous instances of heroic virtue, and of generous devotion to the welfare of their Country, to which the revolution has given rise. He will trace in the successive events of the war, the difference between the soldier who combats for liberty, who superadds to the strength of his body the energy of his soul, and the mercenary troops, in whose estimation safety, and danger, hold the place of conquest, and of defeat, and will from thence deduce maxims of the

the highest importance, and lessons of the surest instruction for future times.

It is indeed a great instance of condescension in Mr. Burke, that professing, as he does, so decided an opinion that an accommodation with France cannot take place without the total ruin of this country, he should enter so fully into the discussion of the mode and ceremonial, of the proposed treaty. As he is not deficient in acuteness, he perhaps perceived that the reasons with which he was enabled to enforce his leading propositions, were not of the most substantial kind; and that they might not despise the auxiliary aid derived from the mere difficulties of a negotiation. Accordingly he has employed a great part of his first letter in demonstrating, that we ought by no means to exhibit any symptoms of an earnest desire for peace; "There is in reserve," says he, "not only something of dignity, but a great
" deal

“deal of prudence too.” (a) Thus, whilst the stream of human blood is flowing, and widows and orphans may be numbered in the same succession as the minutes on the clock, this advocate of propriety deliberately undertakes to prove, that it is not our province to move the first leg. Unfortunately for Mr. Burke, his maxims are rather framed for his immediate purpose, than applicable as rules of general conduct; otherwise it is difficult to conceive how he can condemn the unceremonious forwardness of the British ministry, and at the same time not approve of the dignity with which, it seems, the French received our offers. They appear indeed, by what strange fatality I shall not undertake to determine, to have entertained precisely the same opinion with Mr. Burke,

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(a) *Letters*, p. 26.

and to have acted up to his own precepts. They were aware of those deep maxims of policy, "That a peace too eagerly fought, is not always the soonest obtained"—"That the discovery of vehement wishes, generally frustrates their attainment," and that "your adversary has gained a great advantage over you, when he finds you impatient to conclude a treaty." (a) They despised our glances and our oglings, they received not with impassioned transport, the official note of Mr. Wickham, nor stooped from the height of their dignity to partake our offered embrace. Why Mr. Burke stigmatizes as "vicious," and as "insolent" in the French Directory, (b) a mode of conduct so consistent with his own rules, and which he so strongly recommends to the British Ministry,

(a) *Letters*, p. 25.

(b) *Letters*, p. 24.

nistry, we must leave it to some future letter of his promised series to explain.

But alas, if we examine more narrowly the intercourse which has taken place with the French directory, on the subject of Peace, we shall find no such reason to congratulate them on their superior skill in the diplomatic science. New to the profession, nor yet initiated into the mysteries of state, it is indeed scarcely to be expected that they should rival the veteran negotiators, who for a long course of years have transacted the political concerns of Europe. Hence their official proceedings have not yet acquired that stately march, that decorous verbosity which distinguish in general the memorials of the allied courts. Entering unceremoniously into the subject, they openly expose their wishes and their views, and whilst they decline an intercourse with Mr. Wickham, they confess that it is only because his powers are
inadequate

inadequate to conclude the treaty. Persevering however in the same line of conduct, they mark out explicitly to the British ministry, how far the authority with which they are invested, allows them to cede any part of the territories conquered by the French arms, and how far they are restrained from it by the *existing laws* of the Republic. They do not indeed state, as Mr. Burke has incautiously asserted, that “ this “ law, like those of the Medes and Persians, cannot be altered or abrogated,” (a) but they give the British court to understand, that the Directors, acting in that capacity, cannot, without treason to their country, listen to propositions that contravene it; thereby implying that so far as the territory annexed to the Republic is to be the object of debate, the decision must be referred to the Representative

(a) *Letters*, p. 44.

sentative body, and thus preparing the way for the removal of an objection which they were aware the British ministry might not foresee.

Whether this attempt at negotiation answered the purpose for which it was intended on the part of the British ministry, or whether they conceived that the difficulties suggested by the directory were insuperable, does not appear, it is not however understood that any further measures were adopted by either party towards a negotiation, till the request was made, on the part of the British ministry, to be permitted to send a proper person to Paris, to open a negotiation for Peace. This request was immediately complied with, the directory, with their usual promptitude, having only required that the person authorized to *negotiate* should also have full powers to *conclude* the treaty ; thus affording another instance of
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that indecent precipitancy, so repugnant to the slow and stately maxims of Mr. Burke.

In the preceding observations, it was not my intention to have dwelt upon the inconsistency of Mr. Burke, in condemning in one page that course of conduct which he so warmly recommends in another. That field affords a richer harvest for criticism, - which I meant to have reserved to a future occasion. Besides, the political inconsistency of Mr. Burke is an old topic, and in this respect he is sufficiently countenanced by many of the politicians of the present day, who glory in their apostacy, and persecute the cause to which they had not virtue to adhere. On this occasion however Mr. Burke has abused the license which politicians have of being inconsistent, and has imparted to his new offspring a germ of destruction which anticipates its growth. If he deal out his abuse of the
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regicide directory of France, he displays no lenity to the regular governments of Europe. If he accuses the French of unbounded ambition, and unlimited views of aggrandizement, he confesses that the regular governments of Europe have manifested similar views, to the injury and degradation of their cause, (a) and, with more truth than civility, denominates them *a society for pillage*. (b) If his admiration of the sacred character of majesty be extreme, he scruples not to endanger it by criminal suggestions, and to degrade it by representing it as too favourable to the objects of his invincible hatred. (c) If he never mentions the name of Mr. Pitt without a degree of respect which borders on adulation, he accuses almost all the measures of his administration, with a freedom which few

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(a) *Letters*, p. 148. (b) *Ib.* 149. (c) *Ib.* 31, 124.

few of that minister's adversaries have hitherto exceeded. Whilst he contends for the absolute extinction of the Republic, and the restoration of the ancient mild and beneficent monarchy of France, as essential to the peace and welfare of England, he confesses, that the animosity of the French to this country originated in the old government, and had manifested itself long before the revolution took place. (a) If, in short, he inflict a poisonous wound with his teeth, he bears in his body the ingredients for a cure.

Let us however be candid, and confess, with Mr. Burke, that in a treaty for Peace, during the struggles of an existing war, the conduct of the different parties must vary according to their relative situation. But let us at the same time inquire, upon
more

(a) *Letters*, p. 173, and seq.

more solid grounds than Mr. Burke has done, upon which of the parties, on the present occasion, the circumstances of the war impose the duty (for the preservation of human life, and the prevention of human misery, is always a duty) of making the first advance towards a reconciliation. The only just ground of a war (for an expedition of plunder, aggrandizement, and rapine, is a robbery) is the preservation of the existence and welfare of a state. Hence all wars are in fact defensive, and are represented as such by every Government which affects to consider itself as a civilized institution. But though such be the ultimate cause of any legitimate war, yet, in its actual conduct, it will assume the appearance of attack as well as of defence, nor can we in all cases determine that the party who first resorts to actual force is the aggressor. The origin of an offensive and a defensive war is therefore the same, but in a negotiation for Peace, the distinction

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is of essential importance, and the conduct of the party who presses upon the other, at the instant of time when a negotiation is proposed, will be different from that of the party pressed upon at the same period of time. That which in the former would be dignified, in the latter would be pusillanimous or dangerous. I shall not hazard much in asserting, that whatever may be the motives of the war with France, it has in its conduct, been, and notwithstanding the conquests of the French have thrown their enemies to a greater distance, still continues to be, a war of attack. The original ground upon which the French took up arms, was to secure to themselves the liberty of adopting such form of Government as they might think proper; the assertion of the allies was, that such form of Government was inconsistent with the safety of surrounding states. Hence it follows, that until the allies are either convinced that the cause of their alarm was unfounded, or conceive it more expedient to incur

incur the risque of its being realized, than longer to suffer the actual inconveniences of the war, the French have not the choice of an alternative. They may conquer, or they may die, but it is impossible for them to comply with the demands of the allies without a political *felo de se*. Nor have those demands at any time been reduced to so precise a form, or adopted by such general consent amongst the allies, as to enable the French to judge, by what particular sacrifice, or upon what precise terms, they might hope to pacify the resentment of their enemies. They have no Helen to deliver up, to the confederates; their destruction has been hitherto the only price of pacification. If a peace is therefore ever to be established between this country and France, the preliminaries of negotiation must commence with ourselves, who by manifesting such disposition, incur no immediate disadvantage or risque; for I lay
out

out of the question those prospective evils which the telescopic eye of Mr. Burke can perceive, in acknowledging the *existence* of the Republic. We can cease from making, or joining in, the direct attack ; but the French cannot cease from being attacked, but at the will of their enemies. These considerations may shew with what propriety Mr. Burke represents the measures now adopted for effecting a pacification, as derogatory to the character of the British government ; and with what decency he adverts to the avowal of that disposition by his majesty's speeches, " as lures, and oglings, and " glances for peace," and " a violent " passion for a relation to the regicides." Hence too we may be enabled to judge of his exaggerated statement of the arrogance of our enemies, whose patience it seems, " is worn out with the importunity of our courtship." (a) This courtship, it is true, has

(a) Letters, p. 26.

has not hitherto been of the most soft and conciliatory kind—its tale has been told from the mouth of the cannon, and its gentleness displayed at the point of the bayonet ; the scene of its dalliance has been the field of battle, and the unfathomable depths of the ocean its bridal bed.

In considering the obstacles to the establishment of peace, it is evident that objections may occur of different kinds, which consequently ought to be differently arranged, and are entitled to different degrees of importance. Of those objections, Mr. Burke's letters contain no inconsiderable assortment ; but as he is much more remarkable for the *facundia*, than the *lucidus ordo* of the Roman poet, so it is no easy matter to reduce them to their proper class. His treasures, and his gems, are poured out with the profusion of eastern munificence ; but selection and arrangement are necessary before they

they can be properly examined, and appreciated. In the execution of this pleasing task, we may therefore be allowed to remark, that those objections to peace which ought to occupy the first place in our consideration, are such as hinge upon the original grounds and reasons of the war, and which I have before denominated the permanent causes of offence. These substantial and tangible objects of our comprehension, are however rarely discovered amongst the glittering assemblage of Mr. Burke. They are perhaps reserved to embellish the pages of his future letters.—Of a secondary class are such causes of offence, as easily admit of explanation or compensation; thus, declarations of war, with all other avowals of animosity and hostility, considered merely as such, may be repaired by the adoption and avowal of contrary sentiments. Of a third and less important class, are the objections to pacification which may arise from the complicated,
and

and in some degree novel state of national concerns, and which mutual good temper and forbearance can perhaps alone remove. But there is a fourth kind of argument discoverable in Mr. Burke's letters, which is founded on the consideration of the present state of this country, both positively, as affecting its own situation, and relatively, as compared with the present situation of France.

“ If we look to nothing but our domestic condition, the nation,” says Mr. Burke, “ is full even to plethory.” (a) How then, it may be asked, can we be relieved from this dangerous disease so expeditiously as by a continuance of the war? In this state of things we look neither to grounds of offence, nor practicability of pacification, we look forward only to that which may be advantageous to us, and finding that war is the most direct

(a) *Letters*, p. 14.

direct method of relieving us from this oppressive superabundance, and being assured that “ nothing can banish it from “ the world” (a) we resort to it, neither in hatred, nor in anger, but simply to relieve us from the greater dangers which a long course of prosperity and indulgence, has brought upon us. By this process, we scour off the violent and acrimonious humours of the state, and reduce the body politic to that calm and temperate system, which may be called the perfection of civil society. In this view, a war with France, or with Spain, or with any other power, will be found equally expedient, provided our enemy can exert sufficient strength to administer the remedy required. We seek a quarrel with the intent of losing a little blood, and our antagonist must therefore be endowed with as much muscular strength as will answer our purpose.

(a) *Letters*, p. 109.

pose. That being effected, we shall return him thanks for his trouble, and assure him we bore him no particular ill-will. This pacific termination is not however, in the present situation of things, likely soon to arrive. With our "imports and exports amounting to "forty-six millions," and "our inland "trade still more substantially nutritive "to the state;(a)" it is difficult to say *when* we may be able to dispense with this healthful drawback on our prosperity, which cannot be dismissed in our present circumstances, without the immediate danger of an apoplectic shock.

Such are the reasons for the continuance of the war, arising from a consideration of our positive situation, and from which none can dissent but such as are either wilfully blind to the overflowing prosperity that surrounds us, or weak enough to object, on the score of *morality*,

(a) *Letters*, p. 79.

ty, to our alleviating our own evils at the expense of other people. The consideration of our relative situation with France confirms in every point our previous decision—we are rich, and luxurious; they are warlike, adventurous, and necessitous; therefore we ought to continue the war. We have nothing to gain, they have every thing to lose; therefore we ought to continue the war.

“ In their government every thing is
 “ referred to the production of force, it
 “ is military in its principle, in its max-
 “ ims, in its spirit, and in all its move-
 “ ments. (a) Our government is, “ that
 “ which pursues the greatest variety of
 “ ends, and is the least disposed to sacri-
 “ fice any one of them to another, or to
 “ the whole,” (b) therefore we ought to
 continue the war.

It has been a favorite mode of argu-
 ment

(a) *Letters*, p. 178.

(b) *Letters*, p. 176.

ment with those who are more solicitous to propagate their opinions, than to investigate the solidity of the grounds on which they are founded, to reason from analogies, and to substitute for the character of the moralist, that of the poet. This mode is often successful. Dissatisfied or perplexed with the contemplation of the actual subject, the mind seizes with pleasure on the collateral illustration, and without coldly inquiring into the exact degree of resemblance, admits that conviction from the imagination, which it had refused to the reason. It is on this principle, that in discussing the question of our relative situation with France, recourse has so often been had, to the idea of *a house in flames*, which it becomes the duty of the neighbourhood to extinguish, for their own preservation. If these may be called *arguments*, Mr. Burke has in one instance attempted, at considerable length, to demonstrate the justice and necessity of the war, by comparing the

the establishment of the Republic in France, to a nuisance, erected by the possessor on his own ground; and the allied powers to the vicinage, who may probably be injured by such erection. If Mr. Burke had been conscious, that our interference in the internal concerns of France, would have borne the test of inquiry upon the general laws of nations, why has he resorted to an argument deduced merely from municipal law? Writers on subjects of general polity have not been silent on those causes, arising from the internal concerns of a state, that give to surrounding states a right of interference, and Mr. Burke, without resorting to the fide-props of analogy, might have gratified his readers by the information, that *cannibalism* is in itself a sufficient cause of provocation to all mankind, (a) and whilst he demonstrated,

(a) "To this let us join the practice of *cannibalism*,
 "with which, in the proper terms, and with the greatest

strated, from historical authority, the inherent disposition of the French to that crime, might, in vindication of the conduct of the allied powers, have alledged the example of Hercules, who is said to have compelled their ancestors to desist from it. He might have given additional weight to his cause by the authority of Lord Bacon, who thought it a sufficient reason to make war upon the natives of America, "Because they were looked upon as people proscribed by the laws of nature; inasmuch as they had a barbarous custom of sacrificing men, and feeding upon man's flesh." (b) It is true, subsequent writers are of opinion, that *some previous inquiry* is necessary

"truth, their *several factions* accuse each other. By cannibalism, I mean their devouring as a nutriment of their ferocity, some part of the bodies of those they have murdered, &c."

Letters, p. 105.

(b) *De Aug. Scient.*

fary before force be in such cases resorted to. Whether Mr. Burke was apprehensive he might fail in producing a thorough conviction in the minds of his readers, that the French were a *nation of cannibals*; or whether he did not chuse to rest so important a part of his cause, on the jarring authorities of civilians and commentators, is uncertain; but instead of arguments of this nature directly applied, he has resorted to the illustration before mentioned; on the propriety and justice of which few words may suffice.

“ There is a law of neighbourhood,” says Mr. Burke, “ which does not leave
 “ a man perfect master of his own
 “ ground. When a neighbour sees a new
 “ erection in the nature of a nuisance,
 “ set up at his door, he has a right to re-
 “ present it to the judge, who on his
 “ part has a right to order the work to
 “ be staid, or if established, to be re-
 “ moved.”

"moved." (a) It would be tiresome to point out the numerous instances of discordance between this suppositious case, and the establishment of a new form of government in France. The former presupposes an established rule of law, which positively decides, *by past experience*, what is or is not a nuisance; the decision of which rests with the judge: the latter is confessedly a new case, and whether it may or may not prove injurious to the neighbourhood, and that in a greater degree than when it subsisted under a different form, remains to be tried. In the former case the question depends on the locality of the nuisance, its being "set up at a man's door," is certainly a sufficient reason for expecting it to be removed; but the latter is a nuisance *of opinion*, and our cause of complaint is an *apprehension*

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(a) *Letters*, p. 113.

apprehension that such *opinion* may eventually prove more convincing than our own ; for which reason we modestly request our neighbour will relinquish his opinion, to allay our fears. “ In describing,” says Mr. Burke, “ the nuisance erected by so pestilential a manufactory, by the construction of so infamous a brothel, by digging a night-cellar for such thieves, murderers, and housebreakers, as never infested the world, I am so far from aggravating, that I have fallen infinitely short of the evil.” (a) But the constitution of France is neither a *manufactory*, nor a *brothel*, nor a *night-cellar*, but a *rule of political and civil conduct*, adopted by a nation for the regulation of its internal concerns, professing to be founded in nature and in reason, rejecting the imputation

(a) *Lettres*, p. 116.

imputation of immorality, and disavowing all sentiments of hostility towards foreign states. If such constitution tend to the happiness of the people, neither the law of nature nor of nations, authorizes foreign powers to prevent its operation. If it prove the source of misery, depopulation, and national weakness, our interference by arms is equally reprehensible. (a) But to suffer ourselves to be deluded to the attack by collateral and partial resemblances, would be to imitate the stupid animal which aims its horns at the fluttering of the red flag, till the mattador fixes the deadly weapon in his head.

In

(a) " Neighbouring nations are never concerned at the mischief which befall one another from their own domestic broils and quarrels: the weaker have no reason, because they are secure from being enslaved; they that are equal in strength think of gaining a superiority by it; and the stronger, of purchasing an easier conquest."

Polyb. l. i. c. 83.

In the estimation of Mr. Burke, whatever measures the French adopt, whether for pacification or hostility, are causes of outrageous offence. Every exertion of the war, adds fuel to his enmity; every attempt at negotiation only increases his wrath. In the requisition of the Directory, that the British envoy "should be provided with full powers to negotiate a peace, and to conclude it definitively between the two powers," (a) Mr. Burke can only perceive an insidious attempt to detach us from our allies, and "to induce us, at the very first and preliminary step, to be guilty of that perfidy towards our friends and associates, with which they reproach us, in our transactions with them, our enemies." On such conditions, says he, "we cannot even dispatch our emissary, without

(a) *Letters*, p. 61;

“out danger of being charged with a breach of our alliance.” In order to place this part of the question in its fair and proper light, it will be necessary to take a hasty view of the origin, the progress, and the present state of this alliance, by which it seems we are bound to continue the war, till it becomes the interest of every other power to demand a cessation of it ; and impartially to inquire, whether we have deserted our allies, or our allies have deserted us ; whether a compact, which has been broken by three-fourths of the contracting parties, be obligatory upon the rest ; and whether such of the remaining parties, as have repeatedly avowed their intention of evading it on the first occasion, can with justice complain of any other state which may adopt a similar conduct.

The commencement of hostilities against France was distinguished by a union of power, in all its combinations, hitherto

therto without precedent in the civilized world. By land, and by sea, an impenetrable barrier was drawn round that devoted country. A general intercourse and participation of all the requisites of warfare, gave to the combined powers a degree of strength, which far exceeded the simple aggregate of their separate force. The steady and determined valour of the German character; the discipline and military reputation of the Prussian; the naval power, the riches and the resources of Holland; the vigilance and promptitude of Sardinia; the gallant and reviving warlike spirit of Spain and Portugal; the preponderating influence of Russia; the personal chivalry of the Swedish monarch, emulous of his warlike ancestor, Charles XII. and the well-tryed strength of Great Britain, respectable in every point, but invincible by sea, gave to the allied powers, not the promise, but the certainty of success. The motives by which these powers

powers were led to adopt a system, in many respects so incompatible with their own peculiar views and interests, were of the most powerful nature. To such as lay contiguous to the frontier of France, the apprehension of immediate danger to their respective states ; to others, the wounded feelings of near relationship ; and to all, the dread of an example of public energy, so dangerous to the repose of despotic states. These, and many other incentives, though distinctly felt by the separate powers, were however with difficulty reducible to such specific propositions as might meet the general consent, and form an acknowledged bond of union. After innumerable negotiations these difficulties were found to be insuperable, and the glaring defect of a general compact, professing to aim at one great and specific purpose, has been partially supplied by treaties between some of the allied powers, and by memorials and manifestos, varying in their objects

jects, and their language, according to the varying circumstances of the times. What the particular tenor of these treaties may be, has been sedulously concealed from the world; but the result of some of them has betrayed their purport, and the alliance of Austria, Russia, and Prussia, against France, was propitiated in the blood of Poland. The treaty of Pilnitz, which has also in some degree transpired, may further mark the spirit of those associations, which under the mask of securing the religion and independence of civilized states, aimed only at the subjugation and dismemberment of Europe. The manifestos to which this contest has given rise, are documents of a more public nature, and are to be considered as a homage to public opinion, avowing the intention of the party under the existing circumstances; but without either the solemnity of a treaty, or in many cases the reciprocity of a mutual engagement. Of the many
pieces

pieces of this nature, published by the different courts, that which seems more particularly to have attracted the approbation of Mr. Burke and his friends, is the joint manifesto of the Emperor and the king of Prussia, of the 4th of August 1792; a production of considerable length, and which may be called an historical sketch of the French Revolution. In this piece that revolution is considered under four different points of view.

I. As it personally regards his most Christian Majesty.

II. As it respects the French Nation.

III. As it respects the princes of Germany.

IV. As it respects the tranquillity of Europe, and the happiness of all nations.

Of these general heads, it is only the last which undertakes particularly to define the grounds, upon which independent, and unallied nations, (under

der which class Great Britain may be enumerated) are presumed to enter into the purposes of the allies. The reasons there alledged are, that the French Government (although then existing under the form of a limited monarchy) was “a
 “planned system of anarchy, tending
 “to dissolve all political society, and a-
 “bounding with *inexpressible danger*.”
 “That the king was without power,
 “the nation without an army, or what
 “amounts to the same thing, having no
 “army properly disciplined, and exhi-
 “bited to their neighbours, and above
 “all to their allies, nothing but *the sha-*
 “*dow of power*.” To remedy these, and other grievances, it is declared to be the purpose of the two allied states, “to
 “re-establish in France order and public
 “security, to cause the persons and
 “properties of all those who shall sub-
 “mit to the king, their lawful sovereign,
 “to be protected; to punish, in a striking
 “manner all resistance to their arms;
 “and

“ and to give up the city of Paris to the
 “ *most dreadful and terrible justice* ; from
 “ which nothing can save it, as well as
 “ all the other cities which may render
 “ themselves its accomplices, if the *least*
 “ *insult*, or the *least outrage* is offered to
 “ the king, the queen, or the royal fami-
 “ ly.”

This manifesto, which was instantly
 followed by those dreadful convulsions at
 Paris, that, to use an expression of Mr.
 Burke, *hurled the king from the throne*, and
 that terminated only in the death of the
 monarch, and the destruction and ruin
 of his unfortunate family, was it seems,
 received by Mr. Burke and his friends,
 as the creed of their faith. “ It was to
 “ the principles of this confederation,
 “ *and no other*,” says he, “ that we
 “ wished our sovereign and our country
 “ to accede, as a part of the common-
 “ wealth of Europe. To these princi-
 “ ples, with some trifling exceptions and
 “ limitations,

“ limitations, *they did fully accede.* And
 “ all our friends, who did take office,
 “ acceded to the ministry, whether wise-
 “ ly or not, on the faith, and on the
 “ principles of that declaration.”

Such then are the grounds and principles, upon which, *as Mr. Burke always understood the matter*, the British nation acceded to the war. I shall not enter into the region of probabilities, and inquire how far the establishment of the ancient government in France, and the sackage of *Paris, and the other cities* of that country, may yet be in the power of the allies to accomplish. My present object, is only to shew how far this manifesto, which, and which only, Mr. Burke considers as the foundation of our alliance, ought in reason and justice to operate in preventing us from entering into a treaty for a separate peace. Taking it then for granted, that Great Britain has acceded in the amplest manner to the terms
 of

of this memorial, it must at the same time be allowed, that the immediate ground and inducement of that alliance, was the *promised assistance and co-operation of those powers with whom the engagement is made*. That object, which the united efforts of *any two* of the contracting powers might be unable to accomplish, might be presumed to be attainable by the united efforts of the whole; and the withdrawing of *one of those powers* from the common league, alters and overturns the very basis and principles upon which it is founded. The defection of the king of Prussia is not a precedent for us to follow, for we cannot infringe a treaty which is already inefficient and nugatory. I will however relinquish this obvious and striking proof of our competency to establish with honour, and strict fidelity, a separate peace.—
 Mr. Burke will himself supply us with yet more satisfactory and irresistible reasons for the adoption of that measure.

Written

Written at different periods of time, and thrown together with interlineations of new matter, on the urgency of the present moment, the letters before us afford in their detached parts, full materials for their own refutation. His second letter is an ample comment upon the flagrant violation by the allied powers of *every compact under which they engaged in the war*. Their mutual jealousy, their dangerous ambition, their treacherous friendships are dwelt upon with peculiar vehemence. (a) “The whole war says
 “ he has been but one error. It was
 “ but nominally a war of alliance. As
 “ the combined powers pursued it there
 “ was nothing to hold an alliance together. There could be no tie of honour in a society for pillage.” “The
 “ partition of Poland offered an object of
 “ spoil

(a) *Letters*, p. 149.

“ spoil in which the parties might agree.
 “ They were circumjacent and each
 “ might take a portion convenient to his
 “ own territory. They might dispute
 “ about the value of their several shares,
 “ but the contiguity to each of the de-
 “ mandants always furnished the means
 “ of adjustment.” “ But the spoil of
 “ France did not afford the same facili-
 “ ties for accommodation. What might
 “ satisfy the House of Austria in a
 “ Flemish frontier afforded no equiva-
 “ lent to tempt the cupidity of the king
 “ of Prussia, What might be desired
 “ by Great Britain in the West Indies
 “ must be coldly and remotely felt as
 “ an interest at Vienna.” After hav-
 ing dwelt at great length on the ambi-
 tion, the rapacity, and the inconsistent
 views of the allies, he adds, “ The mo-
 “ ment this war came to be considered
 “ as a war merely of profit, *the actual*
 “ *circumstances are such, that it never*
 “ *could become really a war of alliance.*”

If

If the war neither is, nor ever can become, *a war of alliance*, Mr. Burke will perhaps on some future occasion, condescend to inform us *what kind of a war* it is; and what are the obstacles that prevent us, in point of justice, honour, and fidelity, from effecting, if it yet be possible, a peace for ourselves.

In preventing, as far as lies in his power, every measure of a pacific tendency, Mr. Burke is indefatigable. If he cannot oppose it by mountains, he will, in the paroxysms of his wrath, heap up pebbles, and cement them together with the rakings of the kennel. No species of opposition is too absurd, no mode of enforcing it too abusive, for him to employ. Fearful that his representations should fail of success with the ministry, he appears to flatter himself with the hope of preventing the negotiation, by deterring any person from undertaking the embassy. The folly of
such

such an attempt might have passed unnoticed, had not the manner in which it is enforced, called for particular reprehension. The first indication of his purpose, appears in the offensive and unwarrantable manner in which he adverts to the ambassadors from the different courts of Europe, now resident at Paris ; “ these ambassadors,” says he, “ may easily return as good courtiers as they went ; but can they ever return from that degrading residence loyal and faithful subjects ; or with any true affection to their master, or true attachment to the constitution, religion, or laws of their country ? There is great danger that they who enter smiling into this Trophonian cave, will come out of it *sad and serious conspirators ; and such will continue as long as they live.* They will become true conductors of contagion to every country which has had the misfortune to send them to the source of that

F “ electricity.”

"electricity." (a) The Danish ambassador, through whose interference the safe conduct was obtained for our present envoy, is respectfully denominated, "one of those unhappy gentlemen in whose persons royalty is insulted and degraded, at the seat of plebeian pride, and upstart insolence." (b) Having thus prepared the way, he soon afterwards singles out the specific object of his attack, and anticipates the infamy of the man, who may be so lost to shame, as to take upon him the impending treaty. At the time Mr. Burke wrote, he could not indeed attach the disgrace to the name of a person not then determined on; but he defined with precision the character which was ever afterwards to be applied to him, he prepared the badge of disgrace which he must ever afterwards wear. "Whoever," says he, "goes

(a) *Letters*, p. 34. 35. (b) *Letters*, p. 49.

" goes to the Directorial presence
 " under this passport, with this offen-
 " sive comment and foul explanation,
 " goes, in the avowed sense of the court
 " to which he is sent ; as the instrument
 " of a government dissociated from the
 " interests and wishes of the nation, for
 " the purpose of cheating both the peo-
 " ple of France, and the people of Eng-
 " land. He goes out *the declared emis-*
 " *sary of a faithless ministry.* He has
 " perfidy for his credentials. He has
 " national weakness for his full powers.
 " *I yet doubt whether any one can be*
 " *found to invest himself with such a cha-*
 " *rafter.* If there should, it would be
 " pleasant to read his instructions on the
 " answer which he is to give to the Di-
 " rectory, in case they should repeat to
 " him the substance of the manifesto,
 " which he carries with him in his port-
 " folio." (a) To the astonishment, no
 doubt

(a) Letters, p. 55. 56.

doubt, of Mr. Burke, such a person has however been found ; he has proceeded on his embassy, he has been received with testimonials of friendship, and acclamations of joy.(a) The only symptoms unfavourable to the great object of his mission, are from that Jacobin party, who perform in France the same office as in England is undertaken by Mr. Burke and his associates.(b) May their joint efforts be ineffectual ! or rather, may they tend to unite the wise, the moderate, and the good, in both countries, in their efforts to terminate the present sanguinary contest, ere yet the door of reconciliation be for ever closed, or those
final

(a) " The English embassy" says one of the French papers (*La Quotidienne*,) " will appear to posterity " one of the greatest events of the present age. It will " not be deemed unplesing if we dwell on the details. " On the way from Calais to Paris, the presence of an " Ambassador coming to negotiate a Peace, caused the " most lively sensation amongst a people who are tired " under the scourge of war, &c."

(b) " Every one reasons in his own way relative to

final measures be adopted, which admit not of explanation or debate !

To prevent this desirable object, an object equally necessary to, and equally fought for by both countries, is the sole and avowed purpose of Mr. Burke's letters. An unauthorized individual, and confessedly against the wishes both of the government and the people, he has audaciously attempted to interpose an insuperable barrier to all reconciliation. With a rude and unhallowed voice, he has broken in upon those deliberations, on the result of which depends the destiny

“ the object of this great negotiation. The Jacobins, who regard a Peace with the same eye that a criminal looks on the preparation for his execution, are quite enraged. They wish to give to the English embassy a second representation of the Camp of Grenelle.” *From Perlet's Journal, a French paper.*

tiny of his country, and perhaps of Europe. Hopeless of inculcating upon others his sanguinary and outrageous purpose, he comes forwards himself to carry it into execution. Well apprized, that a nation can feel only through the individuals that compose it, he incessantly labours on the one hand to exasperate the French government, and the French nation, by every indignity that language can convey, and on the other, to instigate his countrymen to eternal hatred, and eternal war. The very title of his book, and the appellation of the "Regicide Directory," incessantly applied to the executive government of France, are a sufficient indication of his malicious purpose. But in order to secure his end by a personal insult, he has directed the full current of his fury against *Carnot*, the very member of the directory with whom it was supposed the intended negotiation would take place. (a) Not forgetting

(a) His anger will now be redoubled; The *sanguinary*

getting, that the resentment of powerful nations has been excited by indignities committed by individual subjects on each other, he takes upon himself, as far as his powers will permit, the responsibility of the safety and happiness of millions, and involves in the consequences of his caprice, even those who detest his ferocity.

It is wonderfully, and no doubt wisely directed by the author of nature, that from the same soil and climate from which some plants draw their healthful and nutritive juices, others collect a poison the most destructive to the human race. It would seem too as if the human character displayed a similar diversity,

nary Tyrant Carnot, is the advocate of Peace with this country; and it is said to be in consequence of his recommendations, that the directory have rejected the system of *La Croix*, the minister for foreign affairs, which tended to overhurry and defeat the negotiation.

Perlet.

fity, and that some were intended by a natural rectitude and benevolence of disposition, to select from surrounding circumstances, causes of peace, charity, and good will, whilst others can deduce from the same circumstances, only the motives of hatred, envy, jealousy, and destruction. Wherever the latter disposition appears, there is no proceeding so open and generous, no transaction so honest, no purpose so virtuous, as not to afford food for its malignity. With whatever it comes in contact, it appropriates it by a kind of chemical affinity, to its own nature ; and if it does not find, creates in every thing around it, gall and bitterness. I shall not press on my reader the application of these remarks ; but I confess, it has always appeared to me extraordinary, that the same man who persevered during a long course of years, in instigating the people of America to resistance against this country, and by measures which in these days

days would infallibly have brought him to the bar of a criminal court, encouraged them to the defence of their independence, should, when a similar circumstance occurred in France, and when there was every reason to presume this great and desirable event might be accomplished *without* contention and *without* bloodshed, have excited a general outcry against the attempt. That the case of America and France are exactly similar, will not indeed be pretended; but the difference between them was such, as upon all reasonable grounds, should have redoubled the energies of his mind in favour of the latter. If the actuating principle of Mr. Burke, had been a generous and disinterested love of liberty, it is not possible that he should have beheld the rising efforts of the people of France, with the obliquity of jealousy, or the frown of hostility; nay, it is not possible that he should not have felt that prepossession in their favour, that solici-
tude

tude for their success, which in the early part of the revolution, agitated the bosoms of those who had been his associates in the cause of freedom. But, when the moment of decision arrived,

" 'Twas then, O shame ! O trust how ill repaid ! "

He with a perversity without precedent in the annals of apostacy, seized the operative moment to pour his drug into the healthful mass, and it curdled into poison. From that instant, his exertions to prolong, and by all possible methods to increase the calamities of the war which he had excited, have been unremitting and successful, and lest some more fortunate combination of circumstances, some returning gleam of human commiseration for human sufferings, should lead the contending parties to listen to the voice of reconciliation, he sedulously collects the ingredients of discord from every passing transaction, and hoards up the phial of his vengeance, 'till the moment when it is most likely
to

to produce its effect. Ardent and impassioned in the cause of Freedom in America, whilst the assertion of that freedom led to contention and to blood; equally impassioned against the liberties of France, and prolonging by every means in his power, the duration of the war, his character acquires a degree of consistency which his opponents have unjustly refused to his pretensions.—*Tros Tyriusve*, it is not *the cause*, that interests him—Alternately the advocate of liberty or despotism, just as his support or his opposition may serve to keep alive the flames of discord, he acts up to the constitution of his nature, and in the economy of the moral world, performs an unwelcome, but perhaps an inevitable part.—

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to produce its own light and heat. It is not a mere
passive body, but a living organism, which is
capable of growth and development. It is not a
dead mass, but a living being, which is
capable of feeling and thought. It is not a
mere object, but a subject, which is
capable of action and reaction. It is not a
mere thing, but a person, which is
capable of love and hate. It is not a
mere creature, but a being, which is
capable of knowledge and wisdom. It is not a
mere animal, but a human, which is
capable of reason and conscience. It is not a
mere mortal, but an immortal, which is
capable of eternal life and happiness.

170



